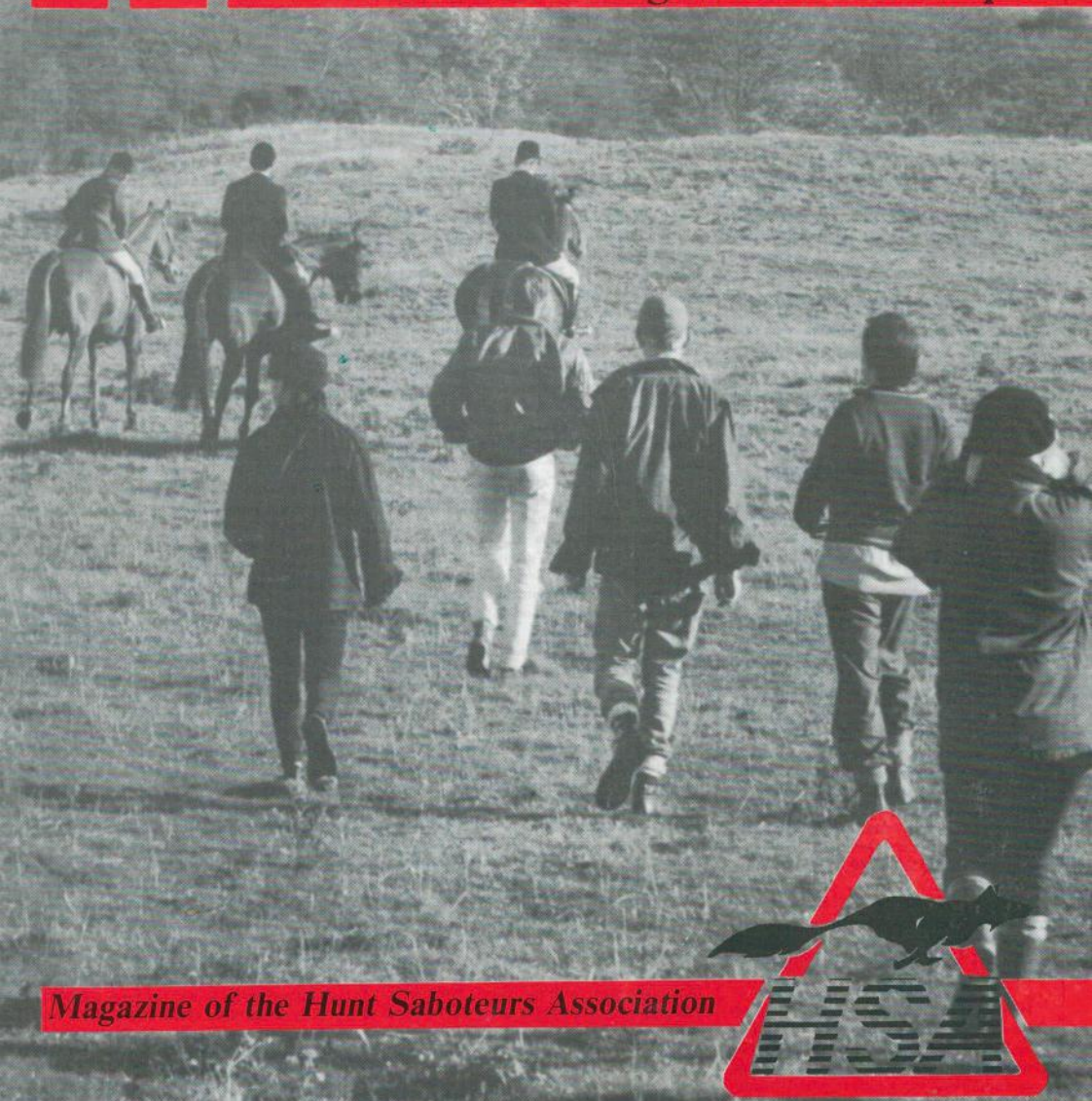
HOWL

Spring 1990 ■ No43 ■ 30p

Direct Action Against All Bloodsports



Magazine of the Hunt Saboteurs Association

HSA

HSA'S NEW ADDRESS:
HSA, PO Box 1, Carlton, Nottingham, NG4 2JY

HOWL 43 EDITORIAL

Since you received the last Howl (Summer '89) there has been considerable upheaval in the HSA (see Guest Editorial) and as a direct result of this, the Autumn and Winter editions were not produced.

The most important message this Howl has for you is that the HSA is still here, and we have a new Holding Committee and address (see top of page) as well as a new bank account.

Due to our present financial crisis we are unable to pay photographers whose photographs appear in this Howl, however, we will of course continue to credit the groups/individuals who sent them.

I have taken on the job of editing and producing this Howl as Steve Poole, the usual editor was unable to, but from now on it will be back in his capable hands so send in lots of letters, articles, news, photos etc. to the new P.O. Box for inclusion in the next Howl.

Copy date for Howl 44 is March 31st 1990.

Opinions expressed in Howl do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or of the HSA.

Howl 43 was edited, designed and produced by Sarah Lewis (Member of the Holding Committee)



GUEST EDITORIAL

Introduction

This issue of Howl has been produced by the HSA Holding Committee elected at last November's Extraordinary General meeting in Nottingham.

Would you all please note that the Exeter office has now been closed down and the HSA's official address is now PO Box 1, Carlton, Nottingham, NG4 2JY.

Many of you will have been wondering what's been going on in the HSA since you received last summers' Howl 42. The two contradictory mail outs in October and November and the non- materialisation of the promised January EGM will have left you all pretty confused.

In order to clarify the situation it's necessary to go back 10 months.

April 8th 1989 - EGM in London

Prominent members of last years Committee had plans for the future generally based, it would appear, around chairman Dave Weeks' "5 Year Plan". A new constitution was apparently required in order to get these plans underway. This EGM was called by that committee for the consideration and possible adoption of that constitution .

Approximately 80 members attended. The proposals were narrowly defeated, primarily on the basis that amendments from the floor were not permitted by Chairman Dave Weeks. He was wrong in claiming that the previous Constitution did not allow for the introducing of amendments to such an important motion at a general meeting.

This undemocratic decision on that day would have been the catalyst which sparked off the chain of subsequent events. If amendments had been accepted that day the new Constitution would have been adopted there and then. As it was though, those present were left with a "take it or leave it" situation which most found unacceptable. The proposals potentially sinister overtones - an unexpected increase in the previous number of members required to call an EGM for example - led to the majority feeling that it would have been dangerous to have voted an unqualified "yes" at this stage.

Howl 42

In the event, the Howl 42 (Summer '89) mail out included a revised version of the new Constitution for consideration at the forthcoming AGM. The revisions were based upon the unaccepted amendments suggested by various "no" voters at the EGM. However, all of a sudden, you the membership, were also being introduced to a totally new, previously unheard of 'progressive' group of 8 election seekers, running on a 'progressive' ticket with a back up forum article in Howl, written by Dave Weeks. This deliberately sought to discredit the EGM's "no" voters with accusations of "populist rhetoric", "conservatism", "stupidity", "bloody mindedness" and "slander" whilst promoting themselves for election.

Considering that this edition of Howl was edited by 3 of the 8 'progressive' election seekers (Dave Weeks, Ralph Cook, and Chris Bishop) and that no invitation was offered to the non-'progressive' candidates to put their view of "progressive ideology" to the membership, accusations of "abuse of power" and election rigging were hardly to be avoided.

1989/90 Elections

It came as no surprise, following the Howl articles, to learn at the AGM that the 8 'progressive' candidates (Chris Bishop, Ralph cook, Mark Dent, John Hale, Maria Lester, Angi Majennik, Dave Weeks and Dave White) had been elected for the new committee. The other 4 elected members were Cameron Evans, Mike Hall, Anne Llewellyn, and Aubrey Thomas. The unsuccessful candidates were Leo Anderson, Barbara Dickinson, Ben Ponton and Neil Webster.

Great concern was expressed at the AGM that, because voting slips had been unnumbered, vote rigging could not be ruled out. It would be virtually impossible to prove this but the suspicion still remains to this day. This is not healthy.

July 29th - AGM in London

This meeting, attended by approximately 100 members, was not a particularly convivial one. an overwhelming vote of "no confidence" in the Treasurer, John Hale, following his failure to satisfactorily explain the previous committees mishandling of the £9,500 donation, was ignored by Chairman Dave Weeks on the grounds that it had not been agendered. This silly intransigent attitude, which simply left people angry and contributed towards a scuffle over the now very important membership files, led to the lunchtime departure of Dave Weeks and Secretary Ralph Cook.

Dave Wetton, a long standing member and previous HSA Secretary took over as chair. The remainder of the agenda was covered. Ralph had taken the election results with him but fortunately Anne Llewellyn had obtained a copy from the electoral Reform Society the previous day. As a 1988/89 committee member she was surely entitled to do this.

It was agreed that Annes' educational 'Fox Cubs' project, aimed at the young, should be given more funding and more space in Howl, and that the recent election should be investigated and re-run.

More specifically though the new constitution, incorporating previously notified amendments, was adopted by 41 votes to 33, with 19 abstentions.

Things should have settled down.

HSA (in) Activity Since the AGM

With a majority of 8:4 the 'progressive' element of the new committee, armed with their desired new Constitution, were presumably in an ideal position to forge ahead with their progressive plans for the future. In actuality though the situation has degenerated abysmally.

Of the 8 'progressives' two have since resigned (Dave Weeks on 7th August and Ralph Cook on 8th January) and two, Chris Bishop and Angi Majennik, are reported to be legally injuncted from being in the same place at the same time. Angi hasn't attended any committee meetings, Chris has only attended one. Of the remainder only two, John Hale and Maria Lester, have seemed prepared to attend meetings regularly.

At the first committee meeting on August 6th the 'progressive' majority took a conscious decision to inflame the situation by voting 5:2 for Ralphs' unagendered proposed expulsion from the committee of Aubrey Thomas (for alleged assault at the AGM) and 4:2 for Ralphs' proposed expulsion of Anne Llewellyn (for having obtained a copy of the election results without committee approval). It was also agreed to expel 2 other members for alleged assault at the AGM. Anne and Aubrey were not at this meeting due to the death of Aubreys' mother earlier that week.

Anne and Aubrey arrived at the September meeting to find themselves physically and unconstitutionally prevented from attending by 3 security men. Only Ralph, John and Maria (and eventually Mark) were in attendance. The office had been stripped clean of furniture and files and the phone cut off. Cameron and Mike, who had arrived with

Anne and Aubrey, tried to reason with the 3 'progressives' to no avail. They both left in disgust and have, not surprisingly perhaps, refused to attend any subsequent meetings.

Those subsequent monthly meetings have been a shambles. All have been inquorate and therefore constitutionally unable to conduct the HSA's affairs properly.

The vacancies created by the resignation of Dave Weeks and the effective barring of Anne and Aubrey have not been filled, as agreed at the AGM, by the unsuccessful non'progressive' candidates on the grounds, according to Ralph, that their "recent actions had brought the HSA into disrepute". It is unclear who was brought in to fill the vacancies. Whoever it was it hasn't worked.

In addition Howl's editorship was taken from the fair, capable hands of Steve Poole back under the control of a less than independant "progressive" sub committee. Also it appears that membership 'vetting' was imminent.

All very worrying stuff.

November 26th - EGM in Nottingham

Concerned members clearly had to act. Another EGM was vital. Because it was felt that the 'progressive' committe would act in an unorganized way or deliberately obstructive way if they were asked to arrange this meeting it was organized independently of them. Legal advice was sought (at no cost to the HSA) on the constitutional validity of this arrangement. Two independent solicitors were approached and both agreed that such a meeting would be legitimate, despite John Hales' solicitors opposing view (although even he never described it as an 'illegal' meeting as claimed by John and Ralph). Notification was sent to just under 5,000 members addresses - everyone on the July listings retained at the AGM (again at no cost to the HSA).

Despite the fact that the 'progressive' committee's hierarchy mischieviously sent out their misleading 'cancelled' notices at the last minute (at considerable expense to the HSA) the meeting did in fact go ahead as planned. Over 100 members attended and each of the proposals was voted through virtually unanimously. No one voted against them and there were only 4 abstentions throughout.

The adopted resolutions sought the repayment of the £9,500 donation, an audit of the 1988/89 accounts, the expulsion of several 'progressive' committee members for abuse of power and bringing the HSA into disrepute, fresh committee elections and the appointment of an interim holding committee.

January 27th 1990, EGM

This EGM was announced in the 'progressive' November mail out as the one which "will settle current differences and decide how the affairs of the association shall proceed". You were all strongly urged to attend in order to "participate in deciding the future of the HSA". Notification of the actual venue and agenda was to have gone out in their version of Howl 43, which simply failed to materialize. Unwillingness, lack of money and/or the inevitablility of the outcome led to the unannounced cancellation of the meeting. Also the refusal of many active groups to submit their group news reports for inclusion in another 'progressives' Howl was clearly another factor in the non appearance of that issue of Howl.

The Elected Committee Today

What remains of the committee elected last summer is now in total disarray. Two of the leading 'progressives', Ralph Cook and Dave Weeks, have resigned. The third, John Hale, has taken on the duties of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary (and possibly others) and had continued to refuse to accept the impossibility of his situation. The remaining 'progressives' have appeared unwilling or unable to help get the HSA back onto its feet again - their failure to organize their own EGM last month made that absolutely clear. The non'progressives' have simply found it impossible to work with these people.

This situation simply could not be allowed to continue.

The New Holding Committee

The Holding Committee, elected on a show of hands at the November EGM, has met twice since then and the following officers appointed; Secretary and Research Officer - Cameron Evans : Chairman - Jamie Hepburn : Sales Goods Officer - Andy Eardley : Press Officer - Ben Ponton : Fox Cubs Officer - Anne Llewellyn. The remaining elected members are Mike Hall, Sarah Lewis, Denise Booth, Simon Russell, Will Clark, Pat Jordan and John Knowles. In addition the new Treasurer is Aubrey Thomas, Contact Officer is Leo Anderson and Secretary to the Committee is Barbara Dickinson. Sarah has had the task of editing this edition of Howl and Steve Poole is willing to resume his role as independent editor for future editions.

The new Holding Committee are all active members, representing a broad range of areas across England and Scotland.

The Committees primary aims have been to organize fresh elections, issue Howl, raise funds and reorganize the Group Contacts system. A new PO Box has been set up in the Secretary's town; also a new bank account. Mail addressed to the old Exeter address will now be redirected.

Conclusion

None of us enjoys conflict of this nature, especially when it involves a split with other members who feel as intensely about the subject as ourselves, particularly those of the calibre of Ralph, John, Dave and company who have been extremely active themselves in the past and who, at committee level, have contributed enormously to the effective running of the HSA. But sometimes, as in this case, conflict is unavoidable.

The extremely devisive 'progressive' grouping should never have been necessary in the first place. Hitherto the HSA had always been able to rely on straighforward logical arguments to win debates rather than sheltering behind constitutional rule books and security guards. The 'progressives', growing clearly more elitist in their attitude towards ordinary rank and file activists - references to "a gang of rabble" (John Hale) and "idealistic and semi anarchist children" (Ralph Cook) are certainly not the comments one expects to hear from responsible representatives of the HSA - simply didn't bother to make the necessary effort to get their views across to those activists in a common sense way.

There's no doubt that most HSA activists would in fact have supported their 5 point plan outlined in Howl 42, if they had been treated properly. But instead resentment and disillusion set in amongst a broad band of them. Many non HSA local animal rights activists simply refused to join the Association and far too much goodwill was lost in the process.

It would have been easy perhaps for the disgruntled members to have walked away and set up another organization but the HSA's democratic reputation was felt to be at stake and it was worth hanging on to.

The Future

This has been a sad period in the HSA's 26 year history but we've weathered storms before. This storm is now over, with an enthusiastic and capable stand by crew at the helm until further elections can be held. All we have to do now is get back on course and, with your goodwill, that's just what we'll do.

Funds are as ever, vital if the HSA's work is not to suffer. That's why we hope you will renew your membership and/or send as large a donation as you can afford at this crucial time.

We are hoping for a positive conclusion to the anticipated negotiations with John Hale over HSA's outstanding Exeter based resources.

Most important of all though has been to let you know that the many active HSA groups still continue as they have since December 1963, to save the lives of foxes, hares and other hunted animals on a weekly basis, regardless of the changes. The accompanying pages tell their stories.

The HSA is very much still in existence.

Dave Wetton



★IMPORTANT★

This organisation is run by **active hunt saboteurs** whose primary aims are - to help and encourage local groups and aid them financially, to recruit new members, and to co-ordinate resources and information which will help to save lives in as many instances as possible.

This organisation has been left **financially bare** by the previous administration.
This Howl has been produced by active Hunt Saboteurs who have all dug into their pockets in order to keep this organisation running. This Howl, we hope, unlike previous Howls, reflects the aims of this Association by showing Hunt Sabs doing what we would all like to see Hunt Sabs do, **saving lives.**

This organisation badly needs your help, you can help us by doing one or more of the following things;

1) **Join or rejoin the HSA** immediately by using the merchandise form, sending it to P.O. Box 1, Carlton, Nottingham. NG4 2JY. Those who pay by standing order to the old address/bank account should **cancel it immediately,** then either join as above, or wait until the next Howl when a new standing order form will be included.
2) **Send donations** also as above.
3) **Buy HSA sales goods** which are now being restocked and ready to go. Delivery will be within 28 days.
4) **Sell HSA raffle tickets** (enclosed with this Howl).
5) **Help raise money for HSA and your local group** by collecting sponsorship money for Harry Cross (see 'Sponsored Cycle Ride'), contact your nearest group (new contacts list enclosed) who will be grateful of the help.
6) **Send information,** especially local newspaper coverage and group news which can be used in the next Howl, or which may assist us in identifying and keeping track of local hunts and their supporters.

SPONSORED CYCLE RIDE

Help raise money for the HSA and for your local group

On July 23rd Harry Cross will cycle from Lands End to John O'Groats to be completed within 60 hours cycling, within six days. all money raised will be used in the fight against bloodsports. 50% of sponsorship money collected by local groups will remain with the local group to fight bloodsports in your area.

Help us to set up new groups, and help your local group by collecting sponsorship for Harry Cross on the sponsor form enclosed with this Howl. Send the forms back to H.S.A. before the 16th July mentioning your local group and after Harry has completed the course (or died!) we will return your forms to enable you to collect the right amount.

We will then send 50% of the money you raise immediately to your nearest group (or the group you have mentioned) and the other 50% will help us to develop other groups nationally.

Fox Cubs - the Next Generation

It is not only the main body of the H.S.A. who are in financial trouble. It has inevitably affected the Youth Section "Fox Cubs".

The magazine has never had a healthy bank balance as the bulk of the funds were collected by car boot sales, tin collections and donations. As an average advert may cost up to and over £150.00, this of course holds back the amount of potential members I would like to reach.

We have the other problem of course, and that is our name being associated with children. I would like to produce a good informative pack to send out to schools, libraries and magazines for the purpose of showing those who are a bit nervous of the two above mixing, exactly what we are teaching the youngsters!

Fox Cubs needs funds, it also needs people to realise just how important it is that we teach the youngsters the rights and wrongs of animal abuse. There is of course certain Animal Rights groups and organisations who have helped me, but unfortunately this can be preaching to the converted. We need to reach the novices out there.

The other problem of course is the age group that Fox Cubs is produced for, 7-14 years. We have to be careful not to go over the 7 year olds heads, and at the same time not to belittle the 14 year olds. For this reason some may think the content of the magazine a little mild.

Our priority of course is the main body of the HSA to get back on its feet - I don't think anyone would argue that point, but the priority of fox Cubs should never be played down. These youngsters are the next generation, they will take over where we left off.

I would like 1990 to be the year where Fox Cubs are invited into schools etc. This would be a large turning point. We do have our own sales goods and orders will be dispatched immediately, although this may be for a limited period as there could well be no funds to re-order.

Since the recent problems arose at the last AGM I have not had my Fox Cubs mail passed on to me including the recent competition entries, so my apologies to anyone who has written in, or indeed may have joined. I, of course, would have no knowledge of this. There has been no new members within this period which I find hard to explain.

I suppose in a way this article could be my way of appealing for funds, but as I have said, our priority is the HSA who are saving lives today. Perhaps Fox Cubs is saving them in the future. Do not forget though, without the true facts being taught to the young there may well be a delay in that very future of saving lives.

Fox Cubs is not a great time consumer in comparison to other jobs held in the HSA, but if there is anyone who may have ideas on how to break down the barrier of HSA and children to the public, they would be welcomed. Also ideas on the magazine itself, or new ways of raising money.

The BFFS have produced a 30 page booklet that has gone out to every school as a GCSE resource book for Environmental Studies. It is full of the most deliberately misleading literature about bloodsports that I have ever read. We may not be able to match that, but my hope is that we produce the children who upon receiving this would know for themselves that this is not what really goes on, and can argue the points for themselves.

The BFSS have cleverly acknowledged the Hunt Saboteurs for supplying information, it does not of course mean they have used whatever information we may have supplied them with.

This is the sort of education they are giving children, we can not sit back and leave it to others.

Anne Llewellyn

PUBLIC ORDER ACT - APPEALS CONTINUE

In issue No.39 of "Howl" we reported on the Cattistock cub hunting case of 1987, one of the first instances in which section five of the Public Order Act (P.O.A.) was used against a large number of sabs. as a result of the actions of the courts in the subsequent proceedings a number of prima-facie cases of wrongful imprisonment were established. One of these cases has recently resulted in a victory for the sabs, but read on.

The facts behind the case are briefly these. All 49 sabs who were charged with the Public Order offences in September 1987 were bailed on condition that they did not attend hunt meets in England and Wales. This of course did not deter many from continuing to assist hunted animals. The case did not in fact come to court until February 1988 at which time the prosecution was still not in a position to present evidence. The magistrates agreed to adjourn the case for a further two months and sought to impose bail conditions that would prevent sabs from 'interfering' with hunts. This would have resulted in the sabs being on bail for a total of seven months with the attendant risk of imprisonment if found at a hunt meet.

Former H.S.A. Chairperson Flod Pamment refused to accept the ruling, arguing that he would continue to attend hunt meets in order to monitor any unlawful activity by the hunts. He gave an assurance that he would act within the law but wished to draw attention to the fact that many hunts were themselves breaking the law (i.e. the Captive Animals Act of 1911) by arranging to have bagged foxes at their meets. (The use of bagged foxes has increased in recent years due to their being fewer professional huntsmen but many more amateur huntsmen in the saddle. These latter often do not have the expertise to put up foxes regularly by hound work alone.) Despite these assurances, the Blandford Magistrates sent Flod to prison for, in their belief, refusing to accept the bail conditions. As the original offence for which he had been charged (Section 5 P.O.A.) was a non-imprisonable offence and as he had not breached bail, (merely said that he would continue to attend hunts in order to monitor their activities), his subsequent imprisonment was felt by his solicitors to be unlawful, and an appeal for a Judicial Review of the actions of the magistrates was lodged.

When the case came before the High Court on 17th October 1988 the judges ruled that the magistrates had indeed exceeded their powers and had acted incorrectly in remanding Flod in custody. There the matter should have ended. It seems however that the powers that be will spare no expense in harrassing hunt saboteurs. The Treasury Solicitor, acting on behalf of the magistrates entered an appeal against the decision of the High Court. The Treasury Solicitor has inexhaustible funds at his disposal and this in itself can act as a deterrent against those seeking redress as costs in these matters can become considerable. However nothing more was heard of the matter by the solicitors acting for Flod until the 21st November 1989 when the Court of Appeal demanded to hear the case on the following day, this despite the fact that Flod was not in the country and was not in a position to make a decision on costs. In addition the solicitor dealing with the case, Peter Ward of Exeter, had been tragically killed in a car crash. It was Peter who had been instrumental in pursuing the case and his loss is a sad one for the H.S.A. To the credit of the firm that Peter worked for, they were able to save the day and the appeal by the Treasury Solicitor has been adjourned to a later date.

If Flod is unable to obtain legal aid to further fight the appeal, and it is far from certain, then he will have to appear at the High Court and argue in person on a point that is of fundamental importance in law and which should without doubt be argued by a barrister.

Watch this space for further news.

Legal Eagle

HUNT INVADES RESCUE CENTRE

On the 7th November, hounds and riders of the LANARKSHIRE & RENFREWSHIRE FH invaded land belonging to Gay and Andy Christie who run the Hessilhead Wildlife Rescue Centre, near Beith in Ayrshire.

The first the Christies knew of it was when their goats came galloping up the driveway and then a wild roe deer ran across. Gay and Cindy (a volunteer helper) ran down the drive and saw hounds in their wood and around a deer enclosure where two young orphaned roe deer are kept. After a heated discussion with the whipper in, Gay got the hunt to leave and she then had to attend to Monty, one of the deer who had been so frightened by the hounds he had run around frantically then collapsed.

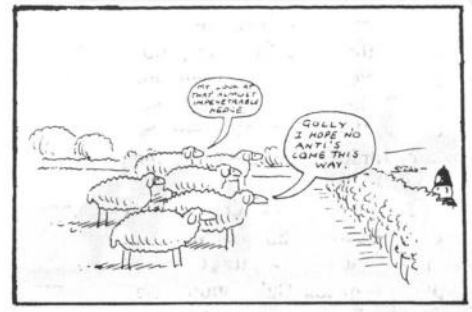
Gay was also concerned about a young pair of badgers who were recently released and had dug a sett in the wood. The hunt have been told on numerous occasions that they are banned from the Resuce Centre land and the Christies are now considering legal action.

On the following Friday the BBC picked up the story and a reporter and camera crew visited Hessilhead with a resultant feature on the incident being broadcast on Reporting Scotland that evening. They also interviewed the hunt master, Alistair Campbell, who tried to blame sabs for calling the hounds in there, but the sabs weren't even out that day! (see also 'Huntsmans Balls')

NEWS OF APPEAL

On the 18th and 19th of October at Knutsford Crown Court, an appeal case was heard for those North West hunt sabs who were arrested on December 18th 1988 at Bradwall, Sandbach during the sabbing of the CHESHIRE FOREST FH. Previously in May, 12 sabs had been found guilty of cruelly terrifying sheep and were fined £100. A charge of terrifying a herd of cows was dismissed. All 19 arrested were bound over for a year on a Breach of the Peace charge.

Only 12 of those arrested went ahead with the appeal, which took the same format as the original hearing; huntsmen, farmers and police taking the witness box in a vain attempt to prove us solely guilty of causing up to 140 pregnant ewes to charge through 'an almost inpenetrable hedge' and thus causing miscarriages and still births. As occurred



previously the evidence was flimsy and inconsistent, with plenty of over emotive phrases used to win over the judges and magistrates. The judge was however, very much aware of the legal ins and outs, and encouragingly not as naive as the Crewe magistrates were when we were initially found guilty. He asked questions when he needed points clarified and established the full details of the events that took place on the morning of the arrests.

New facts came to light, such as the fact that two of our number could be proven 'without doubt' to have been in the field with the sheep, and the fact that two of the sabs arrested (who couldn't be identified) hadn't even entered the field. Therefore if we were all found guilty it was possible that the innocent sabs would also be convicted. This and the fact that there was nothing to suggest that the fox, hounds or huntsman were totally unresponsible for terrifying the sheep, meant all of us were aquitted. This was a totally unexpected reprieve from the Breach of the Peace charge, nevertheless it was thoroughly welcomed.

It took 10 months to clear our names of a ridiculous charge brought against us by a typically prejudiced police force. Thanks must go to our solicitors on the day, Kevin Tomlinson and Rhys Vaughn who both stuck by us and offered their services free in the event of legal aid being denied.

I expect that in the future the Sandbach and Congleton police will think hard about whether to arrest us, having learnt that crimes do have to be actually committed before hunt sabs can be nicked.



FIFE

The season in Fife started with the usual last minute rush, trying to get people and transport organised. We sabbed the cubbing and were quite successful on the times we were out, but the hunt were out more often than us and managed to scrape together a half decent pack.

During the actual season there have been about 5 kills on the days that we were out. Most of the kills were of dubious origin! The biggest problem we have this year is getting sabs to make the effort to come out. It's the same old faces every week. We have a fairly good relationship with the hunt now, especially after we helped to dig a trapped hound from a drain pipe in the pitch dark.

One of the sabs is an avid badger/fox watcher and has earned the nickname 'Badgerman'. He knows all the setts in the hunt country and this prevents many dig outs as the police respect his word and the badger laws, although dig outs still occur on non-badger setts.

Some setts have been stopped to prevent the fox going to ground as the hunt knows they can't dig these. This has been reported to the police but they can't do anything as the hunt are never caught at it.

If anyone wants information on badgers or would like to go badger watching, then get in touch with us.

STIRLING

Saturday 18th and November 25th saw consecutive incidents involving the use of horses as weapons against sabs. On November 18th, a joint hit was held at the EGLINGTON in Ayrshire with sabs from Clydeside, Strathclyde, Edinburgh, Ayr and Stirling. An otherwise heartening day with the pack responding well was marred by the brutal riding down of a Clydeside sab by whipper in, Philip Lucas. The sab was sent somersaulting over a hedge as a galloping horse was jumped into him by the irate redcoat. The sab suffered shoulder damage and shock, but when police on a nearby road were informed they refused to take any action. The sab was taken straight to hospital for treatment and then the police station where statements were given and charges are now being pressed.

The following week at the LINLITHGOW & STIRLINGSHIRE huntsman David Simm cantered his horse into a Stirling sab from behind, knocking him flat, the horse passing over him. The horse's gentleness prevented hooves from making contact and the sab was unhurt though shaken. Charges are being pressed.

Some day a neck or a back will be broken instead of a shoulder dislocated, or a panicked horse will put its hoof on a head or chest. The use of horses as weapons must always be reported, even if there are no injuries and a conviction seems a remote possibility, in the hope that even a brush with the law will act as a deterrent, and lessen the chances of future serious injury or death.

CLYDESIDE

On Saturday 21st October, a van full of half asleep sabs set out for Houston in Refrewshire, ancient and ancestral home of the LANARKSHIRE & RENFREWSHIRE FH. We arrived at the kennels at about 6.30 just before dawn. After sitting around for about two hours playing cards, telling crap jokes and generally feeling pissed off the action really started! The huntsman and whip came out dressed in dust coats and proceeded to take the hounds for a walk, closely followed by our van. Fifteen minutes later they were back in the kennels and as nothing else happened in the next half hour, we went home well pleased with our days work.

As we got to Glasgow someone suggested we should go out in the afternoon for another look, but not all the sabs could make it, so come 12 o'clock half a van load went out not really expecting to see anything. When we got to Houston it was full of horse boxes which everyone tried to ignore. After passing through the village on to the first country road, the heart warming sight of an opening meet greeted us (two weeks early). We didn't have the numbers needed to take the hounds more than a short distance from the hunt so most of the time was spent harrassing the huntsman, making sure he never got the chance to draw a decent covert. This meant that the sabs were constantly on the move, as was the hunt. At the end of the day, although they never managed to kill, the hunt left behind several happy but half-dead sabs.

On 11th November, the L&R were in danger of causing a major accident when the hounds ran onto a railway line near Neilston, Renfrewshire. They had picked up the strong scent of a fox which was seen running only yards ahead of them. They ran off at full tilt, leaving sabs, supporters, huntsman and field all trailing behind.

The huntsman completely lost them and was riding up and down the road asking supporters if they had seen which way the pack had gone. Three sabs drove off in the direction indicated and found the hounds in a small field with many of them on a railway line that ran on a small embankment, with some just sniffing around while others ran along the tracks. Fortunately this track has overhead cables so the line was not electrified. Sabs immediately started to call the hounds and managed to gather them into the field. At this point the hunt appeared on the other side of the line and the huntsman dismounted and ran across the track while the master rode down to a bridge and came along the road. They then tried to open a gate which gave access to a bridge under the line (used for cattle). While the huntsman struggled with the gate about 6 or 7 hounds wriggled under the fence and up onto the line again completely ignored by the hunt. Sabs took photos of this which clearly showed the hounds on the line and the two redocats down below at the gate.

Since the start of the incident two trains had passed, threatening hounds lives and the safety of passengers. the following day the story appeared in the Sunday mail, and the photographs were passed on to British Rail who are taking action against the hunt.

AYRSHIRE

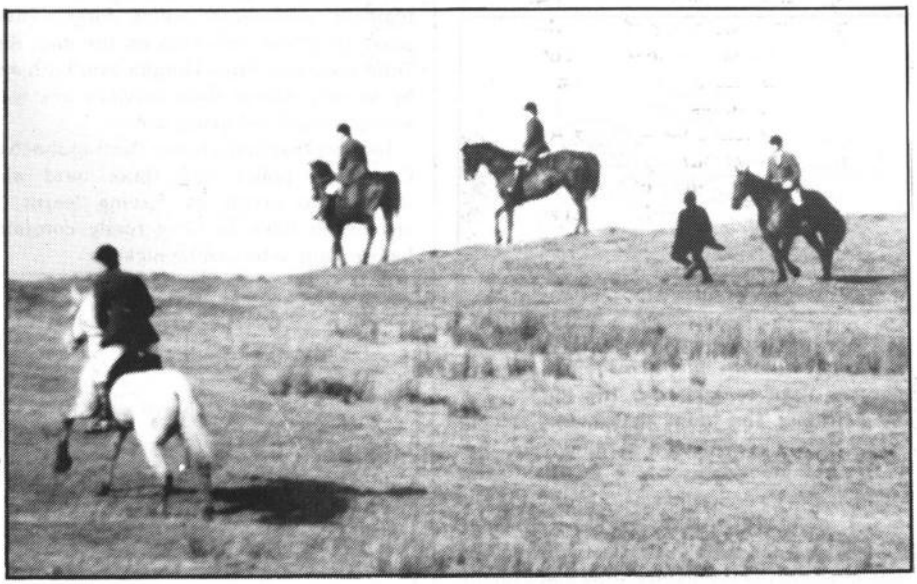
The first meeting of the group was held on 14th November, and nine people turned up. Eight of these were out at the Scottish national hit against the EGLINTON FH at Symington where the inexperienced members of the group learnt some tactics from more experienced sabs, and soon got into the swing of things. The hunt were effectively sabbed all day and didn't even get a good chase in, never mind a kill.

After that hit we had good press coverage in papers and local radio and at our next meeting in December about 25 people attended, (it took the form of a tactics talk). Since then the Eglinton have failed to kill on the Saturdays we have been out.

Special thanks go to Clydeside and Strathclyde Hunt sabs for their help and support.

EDINBURGH AND BORDERS

The Edinburgh sab group has now grown to include sabs from the Scottish Borders for the first time. As usual we have been joining with the Stirling group to sabotage the LINLITHGOW & STIRLINGSHIRE hunt.



Clydeside Sabs

Hunter rides down sab at Scottish Hunt.

They started cubbing on 23rd September, and obviously had a high input of new hounds. Sabs were very successful in drawing the hounds from the start as they responded well to voice and horn calls. Many occasions had the hounds running between the calls of sabs and huntsman and back again, with many splitting and running off in the confusion.

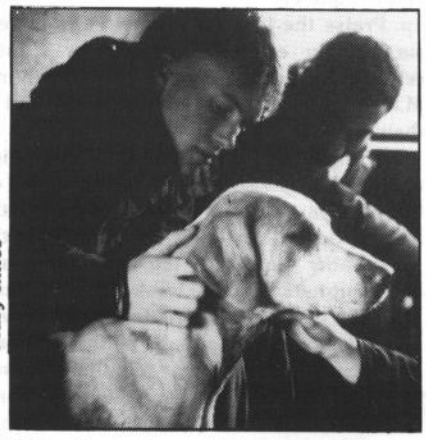
With the hounds in such disarray there was little chance of them catching a fox, however the terrierman (Ian Marfleet) has dug out and killed 3 foxes. On two occasions outside the village of Torphichen, Marfleet killed a fox when the hounds were brought to him he ran in front of them dragging the corpse, the hunt seemed quite upset when the hounds showed little, if any interest in the dead animals.

Hunt violence has been unpredictable with the terrierman and his thuggy friends starting a few scuffles. They usually start trouble when the hounds are scattered all over the countryside, and their frustration is vented by cutting the C.B. aeriels, kicking vehicles and aiming a few punches at sabs. On one occasion a large group of terriermen chased a small group of sabs throwing eggs and tomatoes (they obviously have realised most of the sabs are vegan - that'll teach us!)

The police presence has been equally unpredictable, most weeks nothing at all, then it's over the top. One meet 3 police cars and a police van were present, while the sabs had only three vehicles. Sabs were warned that stepping onto any land or field would result in immediate arrest "For something".

Generally the season so far has gone well for sabs. it is important to remember that this hunt, prior to it being sabbed was very effective, killing many foxes and enjoying strong support from both mounted and car followers. Now, thanks to constant sabbing almost every week for about 10 years the hunt is in a shambles. There were only 27 riders at the prestigious Boxing Day meet, a usual meet is about 15, sometimes dropping to 6 or 7. Their territory has also shrunk with very few areas now open to them.

In November they had a very expensive court case when Marfleet (terrierman) was in court for assaulting a female sab at a dig-out in March '88. He was found 'not proven' which is a verdict peculiar to Scotland and means there wasn't enough evidence to clear or convict. Marfleet's solicitor was described by another lawyer as "Famous in Scottish legal circles, and a legend in his own life time".



Mary Innes

Edinburgh sabs give an old tired hound a lift

Marfleet 'boasted' to sabs that although it cost thousands, he hadn't paid anything as the hunt had paid it! This confims how seriously they took the case, it was a great comfort to sabs that it cost the hunt a fortune. A gamekeeper who supports the L&S told sabs that if Marfleet gets into any more trouble he'll lose his job. Shame.

About two years ago whilst sabbing the L&S, a female hunt supporter Heather Shields, approached the Edinburgh sabs. She explained that her boyfriend was the ex-huntsman, he had been sacked the season before for splitting up with his wife and then moving her (Heather) into the kennels. She obviously was bitter about this and had decided to turn aginst the hunt and assist the sabs. Meanwhile the boyfriend (Roberts) continued to ride with the hunt, apparently unaware of her actions. Nonetheless over the next 2 years she phoned a sab and gave him all the meets, personal details about Hunt members and financial details about the hunt.

Very recently, the hunt secretary (whom she blamed most for Roberts being sacked) lost his position in the hunt and she was spotted chatting to some new masters. Information from her stopped, the worm was begining to turn again. The time came to call a halt to this 'service'.

On Boxing Day sabs called to some of the mounted field, telling them who had been passing infomation to them (apparently the hunt had been getting suspicious of the sabs turning up at the meets etc.). A few looked surprised but Roberts himself galloped towards the sabs shouting that they were 'shit-stirrers' and that it was all lies. He was obviously very upset and was swinging his crop at sabs. He rode off foaming at the mouth.

Edinburgh sabs will keep the strife going - "At their next meet we will give them some more details which will prove that she's been passing us information, that should be fun.

Anyway ... Thanks Heather for the last 2 years!"

NORTH WEST

Once again North West groups decided to give their all to the HOLOCOMBE HARRIERS and as such have been out with them almost every Wednesday and Saturday (they have recently dropped their third day). Sadly, due to sheer luck on the part of the hunt their tally has rise on last season with two foxes and two hares (leverets), the former without our presence, being killed. A pleasant and most unusual turn up for the books has been the disappearance of our four regular police mounties, who have over recent seasons been out almost every week, including midweek when only a handful of sabs are present. In fact, we haven't seen police all season even when 40 sabs have been out! Some dodgy experiments going here?

We have also dealt with a number of other hunts this season, where the police have been less than reasonable. One more memorable visit was to the opening meet of the CHESHIRE BEAGLES. We chased them into a barn half a mile from the meet, where they hid for over and hour, before taking sound advice and packing up. Another good day was had when sabbing the CHESHIRE FOPREST FH on December 2nd. Not only did we manage to out manouvre their private police force, but we also destroyed a 12 gun duck shoot, thus preventing 200 or more birds from being murdered. Unfortunately, whilst doing this the hunt were left free and killed two cubs. These were retrived by the few sabs present. The mutilated bodies (without the elusive 'nip to the neck'), were taken to the masters' house in Cheshire two days later by two sabs, accompanied by ITN, the Liverpool Daily Post and the Cheshire Tonight newspapers.

Active groups in the North West are Manchester, Preston, Bolton, Liverpool, Stoke and Blackburn. Often accompanied by North Wales groups Bangor and a new Wrexham group.

HUDDERSFIELD

A good start to the season with Huddersfield sabs going out in their own van after the previous seasons problems with transport and drivers. With many new members we managed to sab the MIDDLETON FH with Pocklington and Leeds sabs on two cubhunting meets. With sabs introduced to tactics we went to sab the HOLCOMBE HARRIERS on our own, holding them up in a wood for a while. The hunt didn't have permission to hunt some of the land they covered, and the landowners were threatening to shoot the whole pack. Unfortunately we lost them later in the afternoon, and they managed to kill.

We went out again with the Middleton FH on their final cubbing meet, taking most of the pack straight out of coverts a couple of times. We then went on to sab the opening meet of HOLDERNESS FH, where the van was attacked and blocked in by riders, after we had been holloaing the whole pack over to us. Fortunately, we managed to get away without injury or damage. We attended the Holderness again after a couple of weeks with van hire problems (thanks to the student union). On this occasion the hunt riders seemed to have quietened down, probably due to a large sab presence. However, sabbing was made difficult by two mounted police - the first time they have ever been used on a hunt in East Yorkshire.

We attempted to sab BRAMHAM MOOR FH on their opening meet, but they weren't at either of their opening meets, despite being advertised in Horse and Hound. This happened again a couple of weeks later when Leeds sabs tried to find them.

We returned back to the Holcombe Harriers, with North West and Bradford sabs. Sabs had a good day out in the field, sticking with the huntsman for most of the day and stopping hounds getting onto scents all day. We attended a large hit on the CHESHIRE FOREST FH with the North West groups and made friends with some plain clothed CID after totally stopping a duck shoot. We managed to get a meet from one of our very elusive local hunts, the ROCKWOOD HARRIERS. We had just found the hounds when half the pack split off and ran stright over a busy A road. With the hunt nowhere in sight, sabs had to stop several cars to avoid hounds being killed. The hunt seemed to have

gained a bit of form, after previous seasons of total ineptitude and seemed to be trying to hunt foxes more. They managed to get onto a fox for a while, but lost it because sabs were in the field. They also put up a hare, but were discouraged against going after it merely by our presence.

Huddersfield sabs were also present at the grouse shoots and the Northumberland Beagling Festival. Lots more to come!

POCKLINGTON

We've had our best season ever so far, with less transport problems and lots of new people out sabbing. We started off with the grouse shoots at Stanhope Moor and since then have concentrated on the MIDDLETON FH, with the help of Hull, Leeds, and Huddersfield sabs. We were at the Middleton FH every week during cubbing (10 times), including mid-week, causing mass confusion. At the first sab of the season we were attacked by the terrier crew, but after a few weeks sabbing they calmed down. We have seen just one kill (a rabbit), although they may have killed more. We managed to prevent many others from being killed by using horn and voice calls. The hounds have rioted after deer quite a lot, and came very close to being killed after the hunt drew a kale field next to the busy A64 near Malton. The hounds ran straight across the road and were lucky to escape death.

After sabbing the Middleton FH cubbing, we went to the HOLDERNESS FH open meet. After one sab holloaed, giving us the entire pack, some riders blocked in the van whilst other riders kicked it, tried to get in the back, and attempted to drag people out. Luckily they didn't succeed and the van got away without being damaged and with no sabs injured.

The Holderness have been sabbed three times, numerous violent incidents have occurred including one while trying to prevent a dig-out. Police were reluctant to arrest hunt members, but arrested four sabs for public order offences at Warter. One sab has been fined £50, the other three are still waiting to go to court. The Holderness seemed to have calmed down a bit now, after mass sabbing.

The Middleton have been sabbed seven times, including at their opening meet, with no major incidents. However they managed to kill a fox on Boxing Day, after sabs lost the hounds. After the Birdsall meet sabs were rewarded with the whole pack after some hornblowing. We have also been to do the BROCKLESBY FH, SINNINGTON FH and YORK AND AINSTY (SOUTH). At the York and Ainsty, sabs took the whole pack for a long run as soon as the huntsman put them into a covert.

In October we managed to sabotage one day of the Hunsley Beacon Beagling week, doing the DERWENT VALLEY BEAGLES and the COLNE VALLEY BEAGLES. In the afternoon one of the Colne Valley whips holloaed the hounds onto deer, causing them to run straight across a main road on their own. Luckily no hounds or hares were killed. We also dealt with two fishing matches and some people went up to the Northumberland Beagling Festival for three days. We also had good press and radio coverage throughout the season, and a number of letters were published.

WEST MIDLANDS

By their own admission it has not been the best of seasons for the West Mids group due to and ill Transit and general bad luck. Along with Gloucester and Worcester sabs, West Mids disrupted the cubbing programme of both the Ledbury F.H. and North Ledbury F.H., deciding to concentrate their efforts on the latter for the rest of the season. Heavy policing, heavy heavies and the aforementioned poorly van have rather dampened the effect, although the recent acquisition of a pair of land rovers should see an improvement in the groups' fortunes into 1990. Over Xmas, some of the group teamed up with sabs from Bath and Bristol to visit the Cotswold F.H., the Ross Harriers and a sodden afternoon spent with the School Of Infantry Beagles on New Years Day, surely the most unsociable of hunts around, not even the standard 'Get orf moi laend!' was to be heard. Still, they gave up within an hour of sabs arrival, so no complaints.

LINCOLN

The newly formed group have had a good season so far, with only two arrests on the BURTON at a cubhunt. The SOUTH WOLD has had the most attention with nearly every meet being sabbed including mid-week.

The BLANKNEY has been hit on 4 consecutive occasions, but the local police have taken a dislike to saboteurs, supporters on the hunt haven't been too bad but the usual array of rocks, sandwiches and tea have been thrown at sabs cars. However, as experience increases with each outing we have effectively disrupted the hunt with only a small unit of 10 sabs. Successful use of sprays, voice calls and horns have prevented the hunt from killing on all occasions.

Boxing Day saw every hunt in Lincolnshire sabbed with saboteurs from Lincoln, Horncastle and Saxilby out saving lives. One sab had a supporter say to him, "Bloody hell boy, you should be the huntsman, you can blow the horn better than him!"

Lincoln sabs were joined by about 10 others from the Lincoln region to sab the South Wold hunt on Boxing Day. Due to the large turnout (20) a successful day was had. Only one fox was seen, but the use of sprays, horns and calls allowed sabs to gain control of the pack. Due to the number of cars (6) and insufficient police vehicles, sabs were able to split up and disrupt the hunt continually. The only threat of violence came from a policeman who offered a sab to "Wipe the smile off your fucking face."

Organisation here still isn't too good but it's getting better and there's more interest in hunt sabotage.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Slightly further up-country are the self-proclaimed 'up market' sabs of Nottingham! An all year group this who, despite little minkhunting experience, spent their last summer playing with the Northampton M.H. The opening meet was swamped with sabs from all over, and after an hours delay the hunt finally set off accompained by the predictable police escort including the now obligatory helicopter. The saboteurs immediately embarked on a reckless path of wanton lawlessness, committing many heinous crimes including 'crossing bridges' and 'using a CB', but, never fear, the public was saved by some fine police work and the culprits quickly caught and beaten, er, locked up. Praise the lord for justice! Perhaps less surprisingly everyone arrested was later released without charge ... the Northants M.H. were hit twice more before the end of their season.

Nottingham's continuing campaign against the Cottesmore F.H. has struggled on in spite of last seasons violence, often with the help of the Peterborough group. Sabbing the Cottesmore started during cubhunting and has continued most weekends 'til now, although this year the problem is police who sometimes outnumber sabs by three to one. Successful interference continued until October 7th when the police suddenly decided that everything was illegal, especially walking on footpaths. Determination prevails though, and the

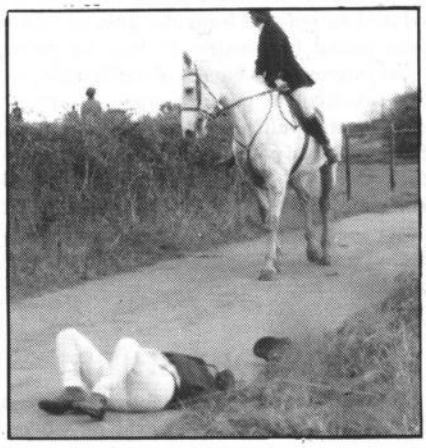


Neil Herbert

Lincoln sabs with Blankney Hounds. Someone missing, not sure who?

Cottesmore see Nottingham sabs most weekends. To try to counter the over-enthusiastic policing, the group took out members of the national Council for Civil Liberties to see the Cottesmore on January 6th this year, who promptly witnessed four Section Five charges against sabs for, you've guessed it, 'shouting at the hounds'. This case is only just starting at the time of going to press.

Awaydays for the Nottingham group include visits to the Atherstone F.H., the exhausting High Peak Harriers and an enjoyable day spent watching the South Notts F.H. huntsman trying to draw wafer-thin hedgerows! On a trip to the Blankney F.H. the police tried to confiscate a bottle of Tippex. 'Just in case ...' said the officer knowingly. Huh?! Grandiose factions in the Nottingham groups have also been to help the Quorn F.H., the creme-de-la-creme of foxhunts; doesn't mean they can't be sabbed though, so the group gave them a few lessons in hornblowing. The first yuppie sab group in the making perhaps?



Norwich Sabs

"Oops, I fell." What a shame.

HERTFORDSHIRE

Moving westwards, Stevenage Anti-Bloodsports group hold their own, mainly sabbing the Puckeridge & Thurlow F.H. Despite heavy policing at the last cubbing meet, the group used voice calls to take control of the pack for a short time, generally faring better on most subsequent visits; they have stopped the hunt from digging out on a number of occasions and know of only one possible kill this season whilst sabs were there.

The proud owners of a new minibus, the Stevenage group have also returned twice to the Enfield Chase F.H., a hunt now split in two by internal feuding. On the first visit, the Luton and North London groups accompanied them to sab the 'passive' half of the hunt - passive here seems to be an understatement, downright sociable is probably nearer the truth as the sabs were plied with drink and given meets by members fo the hunt! Then on New Years Day, a small contingent of Luton and Stevenage sabs went to Arlesay and the home of John Carlisle M.P. to sab the more dogmatic half of the Chase. The huntsman lost about a third of his hounds for some while to the sabs, who spent the rest of the day sabbing at a distance but always keeping the hunt in sight - sounds like a good policy! No kills.

Finally, Stevenage sabs, with the help of the Northampton group, can also lay claim to being part of the growing pilgrimage to have had a bash at the Cambridgeshire F.H. this season. Any more takers?

EAST ANGLIA

And lo, it was decreed that in the land of the rising sun one of the most spirited reports would be compiled. 'Activity a bit down on last season', declared the contact woefully. Still better than just about everywhere else sunshine! Sabs turn out from at least six different towns on a regular basis and have visited nearly all of the packs in their region a number of times this season. Cubhunting found the Cambridge group at meets of the Puckeridge & Thurlow F.H. who dug a fox out early one morning then didn't appear to kill it as no shots were heard. The opening meet of the Essex F.H. saw the same thing happen, although this time a spade was used to kill the unfortunate animal. Not a good day for CABS as they later saw a hare chopped by the Trinity Foot Beagles, but have had better days since against this pack.

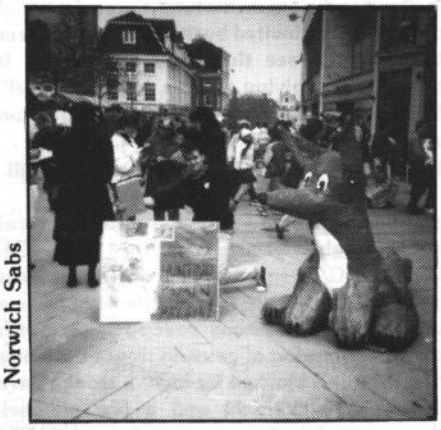
Unable to hold a scent in high wind, the Cambridgeshire F.H. had a particularly bad day during their opening meet at Tetworth, the hunt eventually being called off after a road accident involving several hunt cars in which one supporter died and nine were injured. Due to a combination of good sabbing and bad weather, CABS have witnessed no kills at any other Cambridgeshire F.H. meet they've been out to this season. Despite sunnier weather at their traditional Boxing Day meet still mysteriously failed to chase anything but thin air. Anyone else for a false trail...?!

Later that afternoon, CABS went to see of the West Lodge Harehounds, a bassett pack whom they'd never had the pleasure of encountering before. An easy target this one - don't have to run too fast to keep up with the hounds!

Finally, CABS moved into the nineties with a successful New Years Day disruption of the Cambridgeshire F.H. customary Ashwell Bury meet, helped no doubt by the complete ineptitude of the replacement huntsmans hornblowing. And the former huntsman? Injured in a fall, poor devil. CABS send him their most heartfelt condolences.

Norwich sabs first ventured forth on August 28th with the help of a new group from Lowestoft. Together they went to the first cubhunt meet of the West Norfolk F.H., who weren't very pleased. Even less pleased when they hadn't killed anything at the end of they day, no doubt. And probably incredibly displeased that Norwich and Lowestoft sabs have been back most Saturdays and some weekdays since. No expense spared by this hunt who have resorted to Solicitor's letters and employing a private detective in a bid for a peaceful days rape and pillage. All to no avail though, as the nonchalant local police refused to become involved on the rare occasion that they turn up. Other hunts notched up by Norwich sabs this season include the Waveney harriers, Norfolk Beagles and the beleagured Cambridgeshire F.H. Financial backing has been provided by 'Superfox' (see photo) who has helped the group raise over £2000. Perhaps other groups should try it - it works wonders for your bank account!

Another hunt in this region is the Essex & Suffolk F.H. who have been paid close attention by sabs from Ipswich and Sudbury, particularly throughout cubhunting when the order of the day was low-key policing and legions of escaping foxes. Only one recorded kale field kill. The Fitzwilliam F.H. are faced with Peterborough sabs on a fairly regular basis whilst the Essex F.H. and East Essex F.H. fare similarly with sabs from Mid-Essex, Colchester and Essex University groups often in successful attendence. Thus, unlikely is a hunt to be found in East Anglia without saboteurs somewhere close by!



Norwich Sabs

Norwich Sabs with 'Superfox'.

VALE AND VALLEYS

Although it is fairly old news, I'll start from the beginning of the cubhunting season because it was quite eventful.

We decided to concentrate on the PENTYRCH FH as in previous seasons and 'sabbed' them quite successfully throughout the cubbing season. Towards the end of the season, however, they took it upon themselves to slash the tyres of two of our cars, causing about £80 worth of damage.

On speaking to the hunt secretary - Mr. Colin Champ - he assured us that this was not done by regular followers and would do his best to see that this did not happen again. He also acknowledged the fact that the Vale and Valleys Hunt Saboteurs were not responsible for poisoning one of their hounds as was alleged by him in the local press last year. The following week, the Bristol group came over to 'sab' the Pentyrch with us and by waiting outside the kennels we managed to delay hunting by about 45 minutes while they went to get reinforcements. Later in the day, the Bristol landrover got blocked in and threatened and one sab was punched while attempting to take a photograph (ironically, it was by the same Mr. Champ who had previously assured us that he wanted no trouble).

After this incident, we took more of an indirect approach to sabbing the Pentrych which proved very successful. We sabbed the MONMOUTHSHIRE FH instead.

We did decide to go back to the Pentyrch (which to other groups might have seemed foolish but as a group we felt we needed to do) and did have a confrontation with hunt 'heavies' where eight of our group were beaten up and one boy had to have six stitches to his face. This was a totally unprovoked attack at the beginning of the day. We have not been back to the Pentyrch since but do intend to continue our indirect efforts against them until such time as we feel it is right to return.

Since November, we have been to the CURRE, MONMOUTHSHIRE and LLANGIBBY Foxhunts, being joined by the Polytechnic of Wales group a number of times and the Bristol group once at the Monmouthshire. On this occasion, the fox went to earth but the farmer would not allow the hunt to dig out on his land. One member of our group was invited by the hunt to go nearer the hole to "see that they were doing it properly and giving the fox a fair chance!" During this time, an interesting conversation was had between huntsman and saboteur . Eventually, the hunt went home without a kill.

Next came Boxing day and we prebeat and demonstrated - together with the local animal rights group - at the VALE OF GLAMORGAN in Cowbridge. We then went on to sab them only to be confronted by two van loads of boisterous Young Farmers with the sole intention of causing trouble. Having had the road blocked by logs, a smoke flare thrown into the van and a few punches thrown, we left the area to sab the SOUTH WALES BASSETS at Wick. This ended our day on a high note as it was good fun and very successful.

Here's to 1990!

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

For the first time in umpteen years the Dummer Beagles had their opening meet tightly sabotaged by members fo the Cotswold sab group, as did the Cotswold F.H. The Leadon Vale Bassetts, Ledbury F.H. and North Ledbury F.H. have also received attention from the Cotswold group, with the good help of Bristol, Oxford, West Mids, Worcester and Wyre Forest groups. Boxing Day saw Cotswold hunt sabs line up with Bath, Bristol and West Mids to mount various forays against a number of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire packs. The Cotswold F.H. and Cotswold Vale Farmers F.H. were pre-beaten in the early hours, while the Leadon Vale Bassetts bowed out of yet another humiliation at their Newent meet, and the Ross Harriers fled for home with much hunting time to spare. Two days later, Cotswold sabs joined friends from High Wycombe, the New Forest and Oxford for the now annual 'holiday' hit on the Heythrop F.H. A great day was had by all, with a fox being saved as the light faded. Hounds were in full cry, but a group of sabs managed to check the hounds, while a sab on the road blew the pack off and away in the opposite direction.

1990 has so far sen two days out trying to keep up with the elusive Cotswold F.H., intervening when they can be found and when necessary. No less than four foxes were spotted on the latter occasion, but by the end of the day the hunt didn't seem to have caught up with any of them!

Finally, the Cotswold group would like to say a big thank you to all those groups who travelled for annual riotous merriment of the Cotswold Vale Farmers Hunt Ball, or rather the somewhat vociferous demonstration against it in front of Cheltenham Town Hall just before Crimbo-time. Special thanks to sabs whocame over from Jersey and the Isle of Wight - see you there next year!

BRISTOL

Bristol HSA started the cubhunting season with three visits to the LEDBURY FH. The first occasion saw the huntsman draw blank all day, and then try a dig out - also without success. The second occasion was still less inspiring: the hunt hacked disconsolately around some fields, and went home. Later that day, the senior MFH was thrown from his horse and killed - the horse had apparently been 'spooked' by a turned off lawnmower. A wag at a nearby hunt later suggested that it had been a sab in disguise.

By the third Saturday, policing had become oppressive, and sabbing was very difficult. On a brighter note, sabs helped finish off the VALE OF THE WHITE HORSE FH on the way home.

October saw the group travelling into foreign parts (Wales) to assist Vale and Valleys HSA with the PENTYRCH FH. Although the hunt packed up quite early, there was a bit of trouble, leaving one sab injured and the landrover's wing mirror gone. The police refused to take any action.

After that, Bristol sabs attended the DUKE OF BEAUFORT'S FH at Fosse Lodge. At lunchtime they moved on to the DUMMER BEAGLES, where they had a very successful day in conjunction with Cotswold HSA.

Next was the CLIFTON FOOT BEAGLES, on one of the wettest days this season. The hunt saw two hares, but sabs prevented any kills.

In November the group joined up with the newly formed Frome HSA and Yeovil HSA, to visit the PORTMAN FH. The Dorset police responded in their usual fashion, with six cars and a riot van, making sabotage very difficult. Nevertheless sabs escaped from police and took the entire pack for a run.

Sabs also went back to the BEAUFORT, and attended a joint hit on the WARWICKSHIRE BEAGLES. At the end of the month some of the group went up to Nottingham for the EGM, and went out with the group there against three local packs.

December was less busy, due to landrover troubles, but the group managed to join Vale and Valleys sabs for a hit on the MONMOUTHSHIRE FH. The day ended with a landowner refusing to let the hunt dig an earth known to have foxes in it, so the hunt went home with no kills. Boxing Day saw the group pre-meeting the COTSWOLD VALE FARMERS FH and the COTSWOLD FH, scaring off the LEADON VALE BASSETS, and finally demolishing the Ross Harriers. Since then the group have added the SCHOOL OF INFANTRY BEAGLES to their tally, and have sabbed the Cotswold FH a couple of times. With new groups springing up, things are looking good for wild animals and bad for the bloodsports fraternity.

MID-SOMERSET

Mid-Somerset HSA has been out against a number of hunts in their area, including the PORTMAN FH, the CATTISTOCK FH, the BLACKMORE AND SPARFORD VALE FH, the the CHILMARK BEAGLES. They've been active against angling (remember anti-angling days?) and also against their local mink hunt, the Ytene. Except in Dorset, the group have seen only small numbers of police, and also say that they've had little trouble from the hunts. With a view to the future, they're planning a recruitment drive.

SOUTH WEST

Down even deeper in the West Country, Exeter, Exmouth, Torbay and Plymouth HSA have been attending a whole range of local hunts, especially the ever-popular SOUTH DEVON FH. They also tried to do the NORTH DARTMOOR BEAGLES, but the huntsman refused to emerge from the pub, so instead sabs joined him inside. In fact, he seemed more interested in buying of the (female) sabs a drink than in going hunting... (Are they human after all? Answers on a postcard.) Sabs have had particularly good days against the EAST DEVON FH, the CATTISTOCK FH, and also the MODBURY HARRIERS. The latter spent most of the day on the seaside or hiding among the cliffs. Foxes kill dolphins, you know...

OXFORDSHIRE

Hats off, ladies and gentleman, to the Oxfordshire Vale sab group, who have been in attendance at over eight hunts this season up until the New Year, concentrating a lot of their effort on the Old Berkshire F.H. Many lives have been saved, but the most cosmic (bloody hippies - ed) day happened at the end of October when hounds from the Old Berks were blown off the line of a fox and hence sent in the opposite direction. Later that same day, sabs trekked to the Warwickshire F.H., immediately taking the pack off one fox and running them along a road for over a mile. Then a fox seen scarpering though a churchyard was saved when four sabs stopped the pack in the centre of Farnborough village, besides which a further five foxes were seen to safety. Sabs 7 Hunt 0. Not quite so lucky at the Old Berks' Boxing Day Meet at Faringdon where one fox died but another was saved.

Very early in the season the elusive Radley College Beagles lost a days hunting when Oxfordshire Vale sabs turned up at their Chimney-On-Thames meet. After a brief stroll up-river to a pub, the hunt holed up in the car park as more sabs from the High Wycombe and Oxford groups arrived. Three sab vehicles blocking the car park exit and an hour later, the hunt decided enough was enough and mooched off back to the kennels.

By all accounts a hectic season that has also included successful visits to the Bicester & Whaddon Chase F.H., Vale of Aylesbury F.H., Dummer Beagles and Stowe Beagles,

all achieved under the 'small group' policy in which the group place much faith.

OXFORD AND HIGH WYCOMBE

Following the most active summer to date with Oxford and High Wycombe groups in attendance at every YTENE AND NORTHANTS MINK HUNT hit. The Oxford group, with groups from High Wycombe, Buckingham and Milton Keynes, have had a successful season so far, adopting a more positive stance in their dealing with local hunts, despite being hampered by constant transport problems.

The numbers of all the groups seem to be increasing and people have been going out most days of the week since September. The most regularly hit fox hunts have been the VALE OF AYLESBURY, the BICESTER and the GRAFTON and apart from one dig-out, we haven't witnessed any kills.

We have also been effective with several beagle packs, especially the STOWE BEAGLES who despite (or perhaps because of) their public school training have shown an increase in violence and saboteur chasing!

Our latest encounter a combined hit on the HEYTHROP (with sabs from Bournemouth and Cheltenham) has been our best of the season. The infamous heavy psycho santa was arrested and the hounds were often under sabs control stopping the hounds 50 yards from a knackered fox was a perfect end to the day.

BASINGSTOKE AND NEWBURY

Basingstoke HSA and the recently founded Newbury HSA have been visiting a wider variety of hunts this season. September saw them out against old favourites the VINE AND CRAVEN FH (of course) but also against the HURSLEY HAMBLEDON FH and the SURREY UNION FH. In October they found time to sab the HAMPSHIRE FH and CLINKARD'S HOUNDS, and since then they've taken in the GARTH AND SOUTH BERKS FH as well.

PORTSMOUTH

The group have covered the HURSLEY HAMBLEDON FH on almost every meet since cubbing started. The hunt have responded violently - a sure sign that they are under pressure, and several prosecutions are in the pipeline, including one for GBH. Additionally, the group have found time for the HAMPSHIRE FH, and have also made the occasional day-trip to the ISLE OF WIGHT, to assist the new group there.

On the island, the sab group has been out, not surprisingly against the ISLE OF WIGHT FH. The sabs have also been involved in the political campaign to ban hunting on council land, and have received a lot of media interest as a result. Meanwhile, Steven Cliffton, huntsman of the ISLE OF WIGHT FH, has recently been aquitted of ABH, although he admitted it was him that rode down the sab in question.

And as if to show that they're impartial, the island's police arrested a sab on Boxing Day for blowing a horn during a 'play' explaining to the public how sabs operate. Now that's what I call audience participation!



D. Dixon

A South London sab welcomes in the new year with the Old Surrey and Burstow hunt.

NORTH DOWNS

NORTH DOWNS HSA consists of groups from Lewisham, Brixton, Brunel University, Farnborough, Guildford and the newly formed 'Tolworth team' (who?) They have been concentrating on the SURREY UNION FH. As HOWL goes to press, the hunt have had only three sab-free outings since early November. Successful cubhunt sabbing during the previous season meant that this year the hunt concentrated on keeping sabs and new entry on as far apart as possible; hunting on Saturdays was thus abandoned.

Consequently the NORTH DOWNS sabs were able to assist other groups at the HAMPSHIRE FH, MR. GOSCHEN'S FH and the OLD SURREY AND BURTOW FH.

Meanwhile the SURREY UNION'S pack has become almost wholly useless, a situation which is sure to improve still further when the huntsman leaves in the near future. Any kills the Union do manage are from digging or bolting. Although they officially have three terriermen (R West, T Dale, R Moore) they often have another six or more 'characters' waiting to do the dirty work.

A number of digs have also been stopped, either by negotiating with the police (including two mounted officers) with whom relations are very good, or by walking in and occupying the earth. This latter tactic is much aided by the affectionately named 'granny group'.

The granny group are regular sabs who drive reliable family cars, and use C.B.'s and video cameras. They include entire families, young kids through to grandparents, and have at times confused the hunt totally. The're proving to be a very dedicated and determined force in the local anti-bloodsports campaign. Every sab group should have one!

The West Surrey Green Party has also become involved, adding their presence to the massive demo on Boxing Day. Over a hundred shouting, screaming, chanting, and jeering demonstrators can have left the Surrey Union in no doubt that they are not exactly welcome in Guildford High Street.

The Greens are also backing local "celebrity sab" Stuart Wilkie in his fight against a libel case brought by the SURREY UNION. The hunt are throwing writs left, right, and centre in an attempt to silence local media criticism of hunting. Their biggest mistake so far has been to threaten 'Private Eye' with a writ for the same alleged libel; this has only prompted the 'Eye' to give more space to the sabs side of the story.

WEST LONDON

The West London group have been active this season every week since mid-August sending a coach to the grouse shoots and 2 cars to the Northumberland Beagling Festival.

Up to January 1st, we have visited over 30 different hunts meets taking in 6 different fox hounds packs and 8 different beagle packs. Having raised £1,500 in the summer, we now have our own mini-bus and we hope this will be seen on at least another 20 hunts before the season ends. On one hunt, THE OLD



Anne Llewellyn

Police herd up West London Sabs.

BERKLEY BEAGLES, we experienced the police at their worst when they used a fleet of vehicles, 30 or more officers and 2 helicopters to arrest 20 members. Despite the task force sabs stayed with the beagles to the end, who did not kill. For up to 3 hours after the hunt finished the police toured the vicinity looking to arrest as many as possible, after all this only one person was charged for a minor offence. Typically showing our determination not to be bullied we returned two weeks later to the same pack, only this time despite again a large police presence including 6 mounted officers, no arrests were made and our efforts were rewarded when the hunt went home without killing.



H.M.P.

West London sabs Tom and Aubrey relaxing in Petersfield police cells after a hard days sabbing.

FARNHAM

Although Mr. Goschen himself is now dead (RIP) his hunt is still staggering along. But not for much longer, according to FARNHAM HSA; rumours are rife that within the next two seasons the hunt will be swallowed up by the CHIDDINGFOLD. In the meantime the sabs have been keeping a close eye on them, preventing all kills above ground, also stopping several dig-outs. Just like them to know what they're in for, FARNHAM HSA have also visited the CHIDDINGFOLD, LECONSFIELD, and COWDRAY FH, and occasionally had a day out at the HAMPSHIRE FH.

PETERSFIELD

PETERSFIELD HSA have had their busiest season yet, going out up to five times a week during cubbing so as to cover all the meets of their local foxhunts. Joining up with sabs from Farnham, Bracknell, and Aldershot, they visited the HAMPSHIRE FH, MR. GOSCHEN'S (deceased) FH, and the HURSTLEY HAMBLEDON FH. In October they added CLINKARDS HOUNDS to their repertoire. Readers may not be familiar with this hunt; it is the result of a long standing strife inside the old Aldershot Beagles. The country, part of the title, the Army sponsorship, and most of the whips have defected to the SANDHURST ('and MILITARY' as they are now), leaving Roy 'Ger 'ome!' Clinkard with not much aside from another new hip joint and lots of sabs.

Since the season proper began, sabs have spent most of their time at Clinkard's, where they have been shown some excellent sport. One particular interesting hunt occured when a saboteur threw his cap in the air. It was caught by the strong wind and blown several metres. The beagles immediatly started chasing it, and a nearby sab quickly hunted them on to it. The pack soon pulled down their quarry, and the whole incident was repeated a few minutes later with the same result (but a different hat.)

Several other days have been spent watching the huntsman trying to retrieve his hounds from various woods (surely not chasing deer again?) But when the hunt don't wreck themselves, sabs of course are on hand to do it for them. 'Hunting on' has worked spectacularly, particularly on Boxing Day. In fact it's been working so well that the huntsman seems to be trying to learn it himself....

CHICHESTER AND BOGNOR REGIS

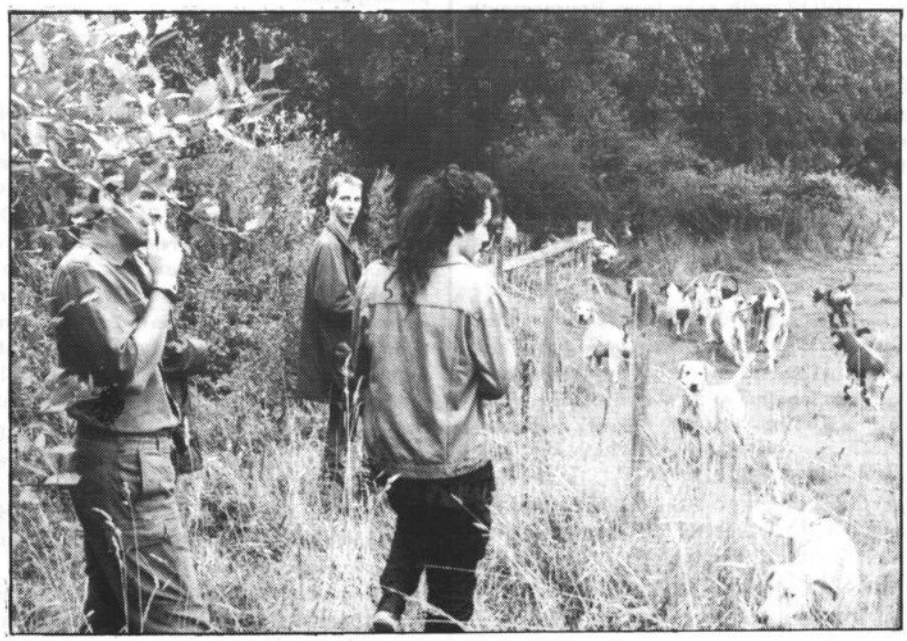
A new group has been set up in this area. So far they've mostly been out with other groups, notably against the HAMPSHIRE FH and CLINKARD'S HOUNDS. They've also visited the CHIDDINGFOLD, LECONFIELD and COWDRAY FH a couple of times, including Boxing Day.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

The group had a quiet time cubhunting, as the WEST KENT FH spent their Saturdays staying at home, surely this can't have anything to do with the sab vans waiting outside? Members of the group had already seen in the Glorious Twelth by sabbing a grouse shoot, and in September travelled to up to Newcastle for the Beagling Festival. They'd hoped to see their local pack, the Bolbroke, but the latter had unsportingly (but understandably) decided that 300 miles was too far to go just to be sabbed. So instead sabs contented themselves with wrecking all other hunts foolish enough to venture north.

As the season proper got under way, the group divided their attention between the SOUTHDOWN and ROMNEY MARSH FH. Not content with saving foxes and hares, sabs from HASTINGS and TUNBRIDGE have also saved a horse. The unfortunate animal ended up in a drainage ditch at a meet of the EAST SUSSEX and ROMNEY MARSH FH. Sabs jumped in immediately, but the hunt supporters at first just stood and watched, perhaps savouring the sight of sabs having their first bath in years. Eventually, however, they helped the sabs lift the horse out.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS sabs have also found time to attend joint hits on the OLD SURREY and BURSTOW FH, the SURREY



Simon Wild

Sabs from Petersfield and Portsmouth with Hursley Hambledon F.H. hounds.

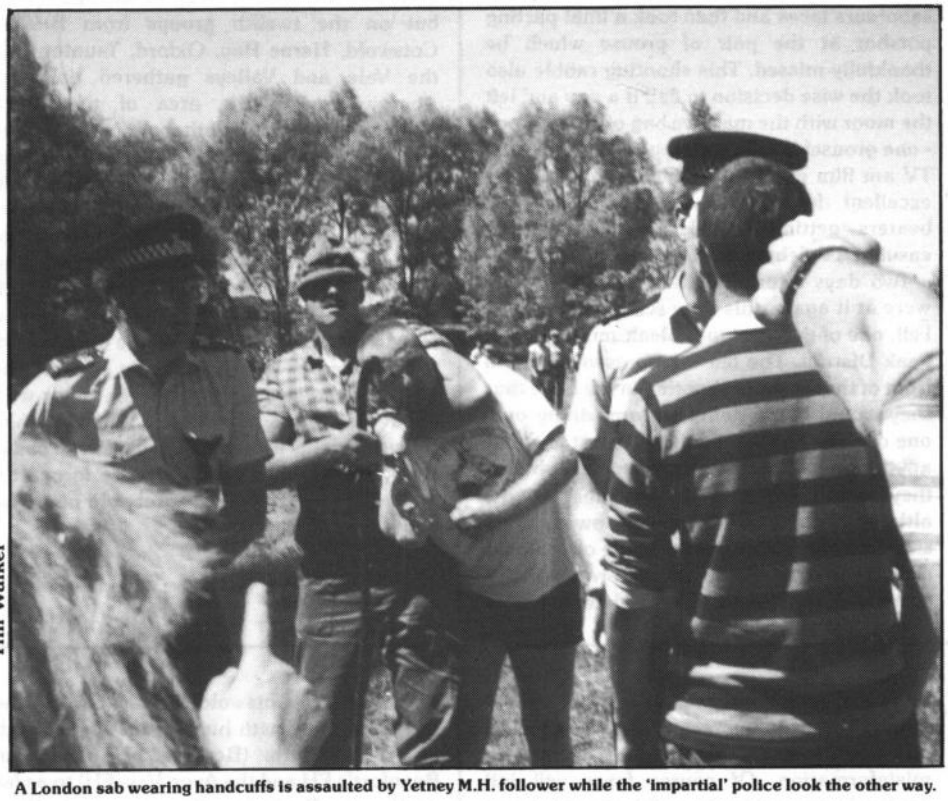
and NORTH SUSSEX BEAGLES, and twice on the SURREY UNION FH.

Boxing Day saw the group out against the SOUTHDOWN and ERIDGE FH, but after three hours the pack was so successfully split that the sabs moved on to the BOLBROKE BEAGLES. Within the first hour of the hunt, the beagles got onto a rabbit in a gorse bush, with four hounds actually biting at the frightened animal. Luckily a sab was on hand to snatch the rabbit from the hounds and throw it over a high wall. The rabbit landed safely and ran off.

SOUTHAMPTON

Southampton HSA has certainly experienced the ups and downs of sabbing this season, at least in terms of numbers. Cubhunt sabbing in September was carried out by one or two cars, but by the opening meet they could boast almost 50 sabs in the field. Admittedly numbers have dwindled since then.

The group have spent most of their time, with Bournemouth HSA and New Forest HSA, sorting out the NEW FOREST FH and BUCKHOUNDS. They have also visited the HURSLEY HAMBLEDON FH, the HAMPSHIRE FH, and even the HEYTHROP FH, but they say that their most memorable days have been at the expense of the NEW FOREST BUCKHOUNDS, rolling around on the forest floor in hysterics while the new huntsman tried to blow his horn. And that's where they'll have started the nineties, on January first...



Tim Walker

A London sab wearing handcuffs is assaulted by Yetney M.H. follower while the 'impartial' police look the other way.



SALES GOODS UPDATE.

Price increases? YES, I'm afraid so. On behalf of the Holding committee allow me to try and soften the blow to your coffers. the raising of sales goods costs was agreed by the previous Committee, but the new rates were never implemented, and so the increments are long overdue. However, in order to encourage active sabbing the price of sabotage hardware (ie; horns, tapes and booklets) remains unchanged. Furthermore, the discounts for local groups (ie; ordered through your contact) has been increased to a hefty 20%. Animal Rights groups get a considerable 10% off and we continue to facilitate free postage for orders over £50. If you still think the prices are extortionate, check out the cost of similar items from retail outlets.

It has come to my attention that many people have ordered sales goods in recent months and have not received them. Let me state straight away that the unanimous intention of the Holding Committee is NOT to honour these orders. The reason for this decision is very straightforward - the monies that were sent are not now, nor are they likely to be, in the hand of the HSA treasury. Indeed, all order forms posted after September '89, and some from as far back as July, are not in the care of the HSA. I therefore recommend that people in this situation consider the following course of action. Instruct your banker/Post Office to cancel your payment and ask for confirmation of this as soon as possible. Upon receiving confirmation of this cancellation simply re-order using the form supplied with this Howl and your order will be dispatched under the new terms and conditions. If your banker indicates that the payment you made has been debited from your account, or if the Postal Order cannot be cancelled, then you can contact the HSA via the new PO Box number.

Finally, let me say that the HSA has never needed financial support as much as it does now, so buy buy and bye bye.

Andy (H.C. Sales Goods Officer)

HSA LONDON MEMBERS...

Animal Aid (London Area) cordially invite London members of the HSA to a campaign conference on Saturday 24th February 1990.

With speakers, stalls, literature, and vegan food!

Plus; details of our protests for World Day for Laboratory Animals.

ANIMAL AID

Starts 12 noon, Earlsmead Community Centre, Broad Lane, N15.
Nearest Tube, Seven Sisters (Victoria Line)
Details from 01-241-1362



THE GROUSE CAMPAIGN 1989

Reports from sabs who were on the grouse moors in August '89

Lancashire

Sabs from the North-West stopped shooting on three moors during the 12th with groups from Cambridge, Liverpool, Manchester, Northampton, Norwich, Nottingham, Stevenage, Tunbridge Wells, West London and the West Midlands joining in the action. The two moors which had been looked at beforehand, and which all of our reports and records suggested would be shot on the twelfth, bore no signs of activity, so vehicles were despatched on scouting expeditions and soon found the first shoot. This was on Brennand Fell, east of Abbeystead, and unfortunately shooting had already begun just before sabs were able to intervene, and some birds killed. The shooting stopped the moment the guns saw the first Land Rover of sabs arrive. A shocked "how the hell did they know we were here?!" could be heard echoing around the fell. The plan of action was to stand in front of the guns and hope they had the brains to realise that someone might get hurt or even killed if shooting continued, fortunately for all concerned the saboteur presence on the fell was enough alone, despite there being twice as many shooters at the time. Their plan of action consisted of retiring to their shooting cabin and consuming as much whisky as possible whilst waiting for the police to appear. The next three-quarters of an hour saw no police but instead more saboteurs occupying the fell, making any plans to commence shooting again totally impractical. The shooting party then decided to call it a day, and flew off in their helicopters leaving the grouse to fly the moor in peace.

Meanwhile a second moor, Saddle Fell, south of Abbeystead, saw some sabs stop even more killing when shooters packed up and headed for home as a line of antis came over the horizon.

The third moor in the area, Croasdale Fell, saw 60 sabs occupying the butts. "Why are no grouse being shot?" could be heard on the beaters' CB wavelength. "Because the antis are surrounding the butts!" came back the forlorn reply. One 'conservationist' did insist on pointing his loaded gun at various saboteurs faces and then took a final parting potshot at the pair of grouse which he thankfully missed. This shooting rabble also took the wise decision to call it a day and left the moor with the massive bag of half a brace - one grouse! Whilst walking off the moor the TV am film crew showed up and shot some excellent footage of dejected guns and beaters getting terribly confused in the ensuing TV debate with a sab.

Two days later, and the North-West sabs were at it again, this time scaling Birchinlee Fell, one of the 'designer-bleak-moors' in the Peak District. The ten sabs present stood in front of the ten butts shooting in the hope that they would cease doing so; amazingly only one did, the rest continuing to blast away at anything that flew. Some grouse were shot as they were beaten over the sabs' heads, although many were turned away. This shooting party contained a senile old colonel who wanted to shoot sabs more than the grouse, as well as an off-duty detective who wanted to arrest everyone. After flashing his police I.D. and pushing a few people around, the sabs ran off to disrupt the shooting elsewhere.

Wales

Plans for the first ever hit on a Welsh Moor were unfortunately set-back by the inaction of a few people on the old HSA Committee who took it upon themselves not to circulate necessary information beforehand; in the event, the day went off better than expected under the circumstances. Saboteurs in the area had less than a week to salvage things but on the twelfth groups from Bristol, Cotswold, Herne Bay, Oxford, Taunton and the Vale and Valleys gathered north of Abergavenny in the area of the Black Mountains near Llanthony Priory. Sabs moved onto the moors, butts and vantage points, but no shooters appeared contrary to information on good authority that the moors would be shot on the day. Then a message came over the CB that a shooting convoy had been spotted travelling north towards Black Hill. Some people stayed on the original moor in case shooters appeared, the rest set off in hot pursuit but eventually found the shooters too late, coming off the moor with about 15 brace of grouse. Whether they considered this a sufficient days tally to call it a day, or whether sabs presence forced an immediate cease-fire will probably never be know.

Cameron Evans.

THE COTSWOLD HUNT SABOTEURS - SAVING LIVES NOW!

History

25 years ago, the Hunt Saboteurs Association (HSA) was formed. Encouraged by a small group of concerned conservationists from Brixham, the movement flourished and spread from the shores of the south coast through the valleys and vales of Wales and then into the heartland of fox-hunting lore, the Shires.

The Cotswold Hunt Saboteurs were formed 15 years ago and still hold strongly to our initial constitution. We embrace all opponents of hunting, and strive to break down both human prejudices and prejudices towards animals. We oppose all forms of bloodsport, be it fox-hunting, pheasant shooting, fishing, etc. We follow a policy of non violent direct action to save the hunted and do our best to circumvent the ever increasing violent retorts of our opponents. We are there to save lives, not to get involved in violent confrontation.

The Cotswold HSA oppose hunting simply because we feel that it is an excuse for needless violence and suffering. Hunting is a cruel and maliciously unfair form of animal abuse, the arguments for which, are both fallacious and downright acts of misinformation. Of course foxes will kill poultry by natural instinct, if the trouble is not taken to enclose poultry securely. Nowadays, though with 90% of poultry production 'battery' based, this hunting myth holds little weight. Similarly, dead or dying lambs may be taken, but this is very rare and does not accord with the 'flock-slaughtering' picture painted by the hunting community.

TACTICS: Throughout its history, the Cotswold Hunt Saboteurs have used the tactics of the hunter to save the hunted. We use the hunting horn and associated voice calls to break/confuse the communications link between huntsman and hounds. False trails are sometimes laid to disrupt well known patterns, while sprays are used regularly to mask the scent of the hunted quarry. Myths of pepper, petrol and even acid being used by saboteurs in sprays make a mockery of our intelligence and compassion towards both humans and animals. We use organic substances such as garlic mixed with water,and anti-mate substances that do not harm the hounds in any way.

THE AREA: Cotswold group covers the Cotswold area, with hunts from as far south as Bristol/Bath (Berkely FH, Duke of Beaufort's FH and the Avon Vale FH) to as far north as Daventry (Croome and West Warwickshire FH, Heythrop FH) being sabotaged. In the main though, we are a Gloucestershire based group numbering around 50 active and non active supporting members and targetting Gloucestershire fox-hunts, beagle packs, shoots and coursing meets.

Summer 1989 also saw Cotswold in an extensive and highly successful campaign against the Dorset based Yetne Minkhounds, sabotage of the 'Inglorious 12th' in Wales, and the beginning of a long term anti-cubhunting Gloucestershire based campaign.

We welcome any member of the public to join us and similarly ask members of the media to come and cover the other side of the hunting 'coin'.

For Further Information:-

Cotswold Hunt Saboteurs
P.O. Box 94
Cheltenham, Glos.

ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH DEAR FRIENDS ...

Well, much ink has been spilled lately over who knows best when out in the field. Do we hunt on or do we concentrate on blanket confusion?

Every active sab should treat this debate seriously; no possibility of increasing our effectiveness should be universally accepted or dismissed without a fair trial, each of us should continually be thinking of how to improve our presence in the field. Every day out should be thoroughly analysed - although I think it is true to say that all of us are guilty of certain lack of self-criticism, especially when we think we know it all already! This is as deadly to the hunted animal as any pack of hounds. Sadly too much of our precious egos is at stake here.

As an active sab of several seasons standing, sabbing in three regions I have seen many approaches as to what is the best way to sab: swamping, hunting on, tactical confusion, large groups, small groups ... ad nauseum. The only common denominator is that too often sabbing becomes an object lesson in chaos. Very rarely does anyones pet theories have the chance to be tested in full, because we're nearly always too disorganised.

Do not take this too negatively - we do get a lot done, save many lives, disrupt the hunt; but just think how much more we could do but don't. What is it about us - do we have an inherent fear of being totally effective? This is just a personal opinion but I get the impression that the buck stops somewhere else - someone in the next van will know where the hunts gone, so lets not bother checking the map (if we have one!) for likely coverts, lets smoke countless rollups instead and wait for someone else to make the decisions.

The herd mentality is deadly, I cringe when I think of the van loads of sabs who have driven miles, committed to saving lives, driving around aimlessly or getting nicked after half and hour's sabbing when there are all those local packs/shoots that never see a sab from one season to the next. Good research and enquiring mind will give you meets for most packs. Why go to the Deathland Farmers F.H. to have half of your regional sabs accounted for' when three local beagle packs have preidctable meet lists? Most of my worst sabbing days have been on big joint hits: hunters more likely to feel intimidated, supporters feel threatened, animals headed, police worked up, too many inexperienced sabs with too few people experienced enough to really know what's happening.

It's good to see friends but do we have to form a beat line for the hunt as we chat about the Grindcore Megadeath gig we went to the night before (Leadon Vale Bassets - Oct' 88 45 sabs - 45 too many!) Sorry for the cliche, but sabbing is serious business.

Obviously each hunt requires its own individual approach, some hunts will wave their magic spades and turn a lone sab group into the proverbial seven shades of celery, so obviously if they have to be done a large number sab may be effective - I know this is the case on the Berkeley F.H. for example. But do we HAVE TO DO these packs, especially in the ways that we always have done them? O.K, so it might get boring doing Dame Dementia's Mouse Hounds week after week, but if it means you and your neighbouring groups hitting four hunts a day surely it's worth it? I will put my neck on the block here and say that the chances of sabs really learning anything are astronomically greater on small number hits - here we have the chance to think for ourselves and to work together as a functional unit where everyone is important, here we really have a chance to try out all the tactics that we are told are the only way to sab.

I found this out when sabbing in mid Wales after two seasons of confronting psychopathic hill trolls whose main purpose in life was not so much to hunt foxes as to inflict pain and intense mental anxiety on young idealists in transit vans. We tried large numbers and joint hits as the most ovious solution - the old head against the brick wall job I'm afraid. It took us two seasons to realise why we were getting nowhere; it was a particularly unpleasant cocktail:- 1) of having very violent fox hunts. 2) of being in a very alien social environment (nice liberal/alternative views and hill farming do not mix) and 3) of being blinkered into accepting that this was the natural order of things. A particularly severe kicking and, later, our introduction to beagling were the agents for change. We found the Glyn Celyn Beagles and the Radnor & West Herefordshire F.H. to be good sorts; we frequently went out in a car to these packs and did some superb sabbing. It was all down to being in a small group, half of us were usually inexperienced but picked things up fast, being in a small group you are usually less afraid to speak out and experienced sabs were usually more accessible. The sense of security was ironically stronger in a small group as we felt very much responsible for each other and developed a strong bond of friendship. Each person played an integral role, we realised we were all equally as important as each other, and being in a small group we had to make our own decisions all the time - a challenging but rewarding experience. If only we had realised all this two seasons before!

I do not feel this was a purely Welsh phenomenon, dictated by the peculiar Welsh hunting scene. Time spent sabbing in the midlands, the south-west and, briefly, the north lead to the same conclusion:- 9 times out of 10 there are too many sabs at a hunt. We can all think 'Great' when we see loads of sabs at a hunt,but how many times can we say that those masses have actually been useful - placed strategically to be with hounds, or sufficiently together to prevent a trashing? We lose much of our tactical value when en masse. The element of surprise can throw a hunt into as much of a state of confusion as legions of sab vans and is more sustainable an effect throughout the day. I have seen two small groups of sabs, using the element of surprise and a lot of determination completely ruin a days hunting, definitely saving at least three hares, (Glyn Celyn Beagles 14/2/87), on a pack that was 'relatively' unaffected by large group sabbing/ That particular day was also notable for sabs managing to evade 8 police vehicles right up until the end of the day, if we had been en masse our chances of doing this would have been minimal.

Of course being in a small group is not some mystic insurance against problems such as getting trashed, but think, when you have been at a really nasty trashing, and I mean really nasty, do you not feel that whatever the situation is if a hunt trashes you it will be more or less premeditated, they will be doing it regardless, nothing you can do - except scarper - will stop it. Most hunt violence is comparatively minor (obviously not to those involved!), being part of the general undercurrent of misunderstanding and hostility; and usually arises spontaneously, whether there's 1 or 100 of us.

What causes most problems in sab groups is not so much policing, violence or lack of money, important though they are, but sabs not asking themselves enough questions; we should speak our mind, do background reading, learn to read the map or practice the horn.

For if we expect to be automatically told what to do we won't get anywhere. Why can't we stop this and think for ourselves - we must innovate and above all get out of the ghetto of dependency. We are nothing by ourselves.

The 12th Duke of Beaufort



"We can of course control the riders and the huntsman, but we can't control the hounds or where they go once they are on a scent, a fox is a wild animal and will run anywhere it thinks is safe."
Alistair Campbell, Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire FH Master, on being asked to explain why his hounds invaded a local Wildlife Rescue Centre. BBC Reporting Scotland November '89.

"I bet you can't wait to get to your sex orgy, we know that's what you do after the hunt."
Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire supporter, November '89.

"You're all unemployed and students, or even worse ... bloody social workers!"
Grant Forrest, L&R Secretary.

"I think hunt saboteurs are very misguided. They seem to be motivated by class hatred, which is ridiculous because anyone can go out hunting, you don't need a lot of money or your own horse."
And on blooding - "I had it done to me. What's the difference between blood from a fox and the blood you get on your fingers when you skin a hare or cook a pork chop?"
Caroline Yeates, Press Officer BFSS. 19 Magazine.

"No-one loves the fox more than the person who hunts it ..."
Brian Toon, Master of Foxhounds Association Press Officer. Living Magazine, September '89.



Gerry Lewis

L + R Hunt Secretary, Grant Forrest attempts to video sabs. "Scotland Yard will be interested in this" he said at the time.

"Those who dislike the sport demand; why can't one enjoy the landscape and the winter without the shooting? I cannot give a perfect answer, save that shooters tend to be less violent men than most."
Max Hastings, author of 'Outside Days, Daily Telegraph, 7/10/89.

"Some hounds have to be put down if the hunt rejects them. For example their legs may be the wrong length ... but the decision to destroy an animal is not one that's taken lightly as the hounds are valuable sporting animals.
Brian Toon - again! Living Magazine, September '89.

HSA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS 1990

Applications are once again invited from H.S.A. members who would like to stand for election to the next Committee, whose functioning year commences this summer. All those interested should:

1; be a paid up member of at least one years standing in the H.S.A. at the time of nomination,

2; be proposed and seconded by two other members of the H.S.A. both of whom must also have been members of at least one years standing prior to the nomination closure date, and who must not be candidates themselves or nominate more than one candidate.

3; supply a written C.V. of not more than 300 words including the following information; name, age, occupation, why you think yourself suited for committee work and what you see the role of the H.S.A. is.

Send your completed C.V. to P.O. Box 1, Carlton, Nottingham, NG4 2JY to arrive no later than 31 March 1990.

Committee work is unpaid, although expenses will hopefully be met, as committee members are required to attend monthly meetings, invariably held on Sundays. The work can be boring, thankless and tiring but does not necessarily take up more than a few hours a week. However, don't let this put you off; one of the problems in the past has been too many whingers and not enough people becoming involved, so now that the future looks especially bright as democracy has won through, surely it is as good a time as any to think about standing.

Nominees C.V.'s will be printed in HOWL 44. The election will be held as independantly as possible from the present Holding Committee. Election results will be announced at the A.G.M. as well as in the following HOWL (45)



To Howl,

Now we've got rid of those people who wanted to use the HSA for their personal ends we can be well pleased, but it's up to us all to make sure that it can't happen again. The name Hunt Saboteurs Association belongs to us, the Sabs, not those who want to play power games and smother us with their ego's, they can sod off back to B.U.A.V. etc., (well some of them already have!)

It's up to us to make sure the HSA survives. It's up to us all to get as involved in the running of things as we can. The HSA is about the saving of lives and the people who save those lives.

At the last Brighton Hunt Sabs meeting we discussed what's been happening at the HSA, and what we think should happen now, and we think it would be a good idea to regionalize, like the SABS (Southern Anti-Bloodsports Society.) We could build up a strong network of regional groups up and down the country and have regular group meetings, with reps going to meetings with the HSA committee every 3-6 months. Ideally, we thought the HSA committee should be made up of reps from as many different regions as possible. We feel that this would make the HSA less open to abuse and manipulation from individuals, and more representative of the needs and wishes of the sab groups.

We don't know if other groups think this is a good idea or not, but we feel we need to come away from the next HSA meeting with a clear plan of what we are going to do and then get on with it, ignoring Ralph Cook and his cronies. All we have left is the right to use the HSA name and constitution, something they no longer have - mind you they've got the money!

If any other groups in the South East share our ideas and want details about coming to the meetings please write to:
Brighton Sabs
c/o B.B.
Brighton Unemployed Centre
Priory House
Tilbury Place
Brighton BN2 2GY

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